

*D. P. Kerr*

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**A  
STRATEGY  
FOR  
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO  
DEVELOPMENT**

**A  
JOINT STATEMENT  
BY THE  
DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND ECONOMICS  
AND THE  
DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

**MARCH 17, 1970**






A STRATEGY FOR  
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

A Joint Statement  
by the  
Department of Treasury and Economics  
and the  
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## FOREWORD

This statement of development strategy for South-western Ontario has benefited substantially through receipt of original ideas and advice from both the Niagara and the Lake Erie Regional Development Councils and the Haldimand - Norfolk Joint Study Committee. Successful planning coordination requires not only that interdepartmental communication among civil servants be maintained on a continuing basis, but also that all multi-county plans produced by either Department for Southwestern Ontario receive suggestions and advice from Regional Development Councils, local municipalities and units of Regional Government, and the private sector.



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## A STRATEGY FOR SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

### A. Background

In defining goals for Ontario's Regional Development Program (Design for Development, Phase I, April 5, 1966), the Hon. John Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario, stressed our belief that "regional plans and priorities should always contribute to the total environmental development and economic performance of the (whole) province" and that "regional development policies are... aspects of a broader provincial growth policy".

To achieve this wider, multi-regional coordination, certain administrative machinery was created, including a Cabinet Committee on Policy Development, Chaired by the Prime Minister, and an Interdepartmental Advisory Committee on Regional Development, Chaired by the Deputy Treasurer and Deputy Minister of Economics. The regularly scheduled meetings of these committees have ensured, and will continue to ensure, overall Provincial policy coordination among departments in the development of all regions.

In practice, it has also been found advisable to implement this spirit of coordination at the civil servant level through the formation of ad hoc interdepartmental and intergovernmental study



committees. Such committees have been examining the inter-regional planning issues involved in the future growth of the metropolitan Toronto and Oshawa areas.

B. Areawide Coordination in Ontario's High Performance Regions

The work of these committees has demonstrated that there is a fundamental social and economic relationship between the high performance Central Ontario region and the almost equally dynamic remainder of Southwestern Ontario. No one of these regions can be effectively planned in isolation from the others.

Since the need for inter-regional coordination has already been recognized and is now being served in the Toronto and Oshawa areas, this paper will concentrate on issues requiring coordination in the Niagara, Midwestern Ontario, Lake Erie and St. Clair regions, hereafter referred to as Southwestern Ontario.

C. Inter-Regional Coordination in Southwestern Ontario

Recent events have demonstrated the need for inter-regional coordination of development planning in the heavily urbanized and rapidly developing southwestern Ontario regions of Niagara, Midwestern Ontario, Lake Erie and St. Clair. (See Figure 1).

Perhaps the most dramatic of these current happenings has been the emergence of the Lake Erie foreshore as a major









future corridor of heavy industrial development for the next 30 years. The widely spaced site plans of the Steel Company of Canada, Dominion Foundry and Steel Company, Texaco and Ontario Hydro demonstrate the urgency of planning lakeshore development and conservation as a continuous system from Windsor to Port Colborne, requiring collaboration among three closely related economic regions.

One element in this lakefront planning must be the conservation and development of water-oriented recreation resources. Land-oriented recreation is also important to Southwestern Ontario and a multi-regional recreation system plan - the Niagara Escarpment Study - is now being evaluated.

Throughout Southwestern Ontario, inland cities are increasingly turning to Lake Erie and Lake Huron for their future supply of municipal water. The most economical use of these long distance distribution pipelines requires inter-city collaboration and inter-regional planning.

Finally, under the supervision of the Advisory Committee on Regional Development, the Regional Development Branch of the Department of Treasury and Economics and the Department of Municipal Affairs are nearing completion of plans for Southwestern Ontario and evaluation studies and plans for the Haldimand-Norfolk area. The studies of both departments and the Haldimand-Norfolk



Joint Study Committee reveal the presence of very strong future urbanization pressures within Southwestern Ontario. The best guidance for solutions to such growth problems cannot be found in planning perspectives which are limited by the artificial boundaries of a single municipality, a single county or even a single region.

It is the purpose of this policy paper to provide a broad regional setting for viewing Southwestern Ontario's overall development, to apply Ontario's existing regional development goals as development objectives for Southwestern Ontario, and to explore the implication of these development objectives for planning in the Haldimand-Norfolk area.

#### D. Southwestern Ontario's Regional Setting

As an initial step in preparing regional plans, the Regional Development Branch carried out a massive analysis of trends in the Province, using 63 indicators of social and economic change. In this study, changes within the smallest geographic unit for which data were available were compared with the rate of change for the Province as a whole. Five levels of overall performance have been identified: very high, moderate, average, moderately low and very low.

Figure 2 shows the overall trends in Ontario by county,









as revealed by all 63 indicators. Figure 3 shows the change in total population of the Province by townships between 1951 and 1966. In each case we can clearly see the very high relative growth rate around the western end of Lake Ontario, extending throughout Southwestern Ontario to the international border at Windsor and Sarnia. It is conspicuous that the only sizable areas which have been by-passed by this generally continuous belt of prosperity and growth are those southern tier counties and townships which will experience the most direct and immediate impact from development of the Stelco and Dofasco sites.

The rush to acquire waterfront industrial sites along Lake Erie and the multi-regional growth of Southwestern Ontario are not coincidental events but, at least in part, the consequence of international geography and trade patterns which are shaping new megalopolitan forms of human settlement.

In his Developing Urban Detroit Area Research Project, C.A. Doxiadis identifies an embryonic "Great Lakes Megalopolis" extending roughly from Milwaukee to Pittsburgh by way of Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland, with a "Canadian Extension" along the north shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario and the St. Lawrence River to Quebec City; and another extension from the Niagara-Buffalo area into New York State towards the so-called "eastern megalopolis". Similarly, Change, Challenge, Response: A Development Policy for New York State, published in 1964 by the State Office for Regional









Development, identifies two major development corridors, Detroit-Montreal and Washington-Boston, with offshoots converging on Pittsburgh; and several secondary development corridors, one extending roughly from Hamilton towards Boston. (See Figure 4)

Both studies, then, agree on the emergence of two major urban complexes on the "macro-regional" scale, one in the southern part of the Great Lakes Region, and one on the eastern seaboard. Both reports see a developing link between them, running from Niagara Falls-Buffalo to Boston.

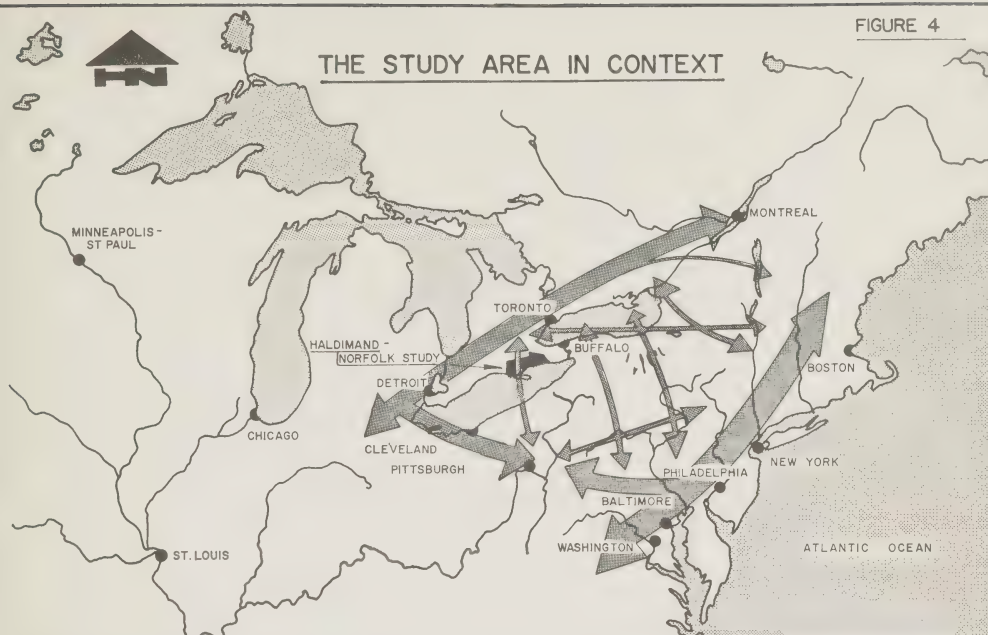
It is thus possible to envisage the gradual emergence of a major development corridor from the eastern shore of Lake Michigan to the Atlantic, by way of Southwestern Ontario and the Mohawk Gap. For Ontario, this would mean something analogous to the "401 Corridor" (or, in Professor E. G. Pleva's term, the "Grand Trunk Corridor") extending from Windsor and Sarnia through London and Waterloo-Kitchener to Niagara Falls-Welland and Toronto.

Admittedly, this is impressionistic. But, if one makes the reasonable assumption of a gradual dismantling of U.S. - Canada trade barriers, and if one considers the probable long-term development pattern of east central North America as a whole (and we will increasingly have to think at this scale), the prospect is not at all unrealistic. It is certainly significant that four of the largest industrial developments announced in Ontario in the last

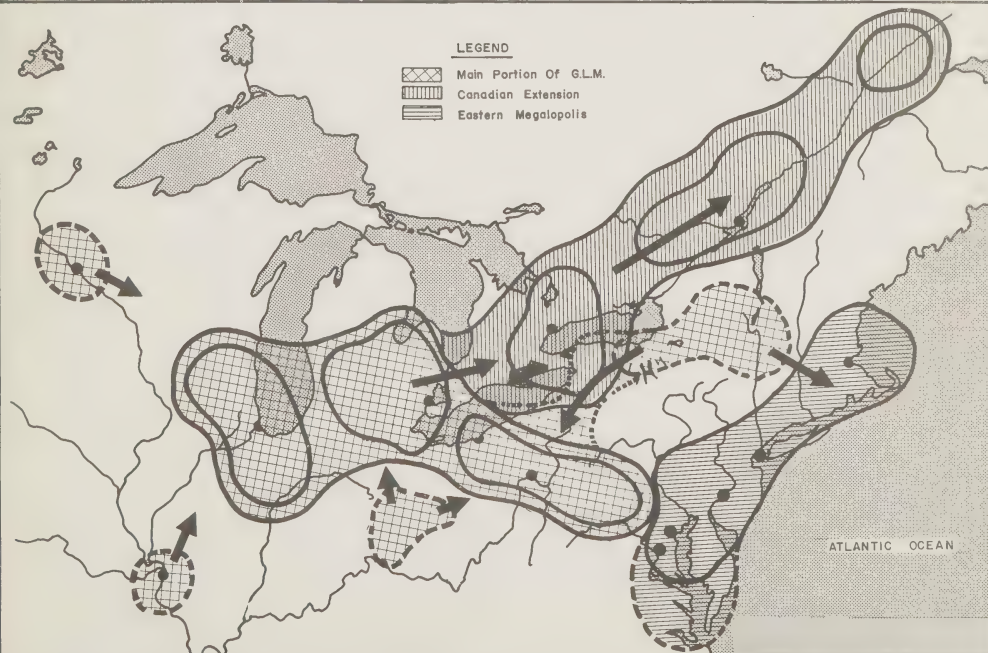


FIGURE 4

# THE STUDY AREA IN CONTEXT



## DEVELOPMENT CORRIDORS, NEW YORK STATE after "CHANGE, CHALLENGE, RESPONSE"



## GREAT LAKES "MEGALOPOLIS" after DOXIADIS





few years are in this corridor: Ford at Talbotville, Dofasco at Port Burwell and Stelco and Texaco at Nanticoke. The implication is that Ford, Stelco, Dofasco and Texaco are not isolated occurrences which merely happened to occur fairly close to each other, but are probably the forerunners of a new "industrial revolution" among the communities and farmlands of Southwestern Ontario.

As previously noted, industrialization is already precipitating sustained multi-regional urban growth which can be expected to accelerate to very sizable proportions over the next three decades. With proper advance planning, the 12,000 square miles of Southwestern Ontario should readily accommodate all prospective land use requirements.

We also acknowledge the challenge of avoiding the urban sprawl, congestion, high social costs, loss of prime farmland and environmental erosion which have frequently characterized North America's other super-city, the Atlantic Coastline Megalopolis.

The realization of Southwestern Ontario's full potential and minimization of these implicit environmental conflicts depend upon the fulfillment of existing Provincial regional development goals and the application of these goals as planning objectives in shaping future growth in the Niagara, Midwestern Ontario, Lake Erie and St. Clair regions.



E. Ontario's Regional Development Goals:

In the White Paper, Design for Development, Phases I and II, presented in the Legislature by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Ontario Government outlined certain fundamental regional development policies. These were later elaborated by the Treasurer and Minister of Economics in November 1969, as follows:

1. That the vital role of the private sector be recognized, that its contribution to the Provincial economy be continuously assessed in view of Provincial needs and resources, and that Provincial policies be formed to encourage a rational expansion of the private sector.
2. That individuals be encouraged to develop their full capabilities through provision of a climate of expanding social and economic opportunities for each region.
3. That regional and resources policies encourage adequate development of the natural environment while conserving the aesthetic and ecological balance qualities of that environment.
4. That the timing and impact of Ontario's large and expanding public expenditures be effectively planned and co-ordinated to fulfil, in an orderly way, the needs of regions in the Province as well as the Province itself.



5. That this be a Program for Regional Development which must necessarily involve a working partnership between all of the people of Ontario and Government.

F. Development Objectives for Southwestern Ontario:

Southwestern Ontario is characterized by a large number of medium-sized communities, distributed in depth throughout a compact urbanizing area which extends approximately 180 miles from east to west and 60 miles northward from Lake Erie. Many of the area's communities have developed a fair degree of economic specialization in chemicals, primary metals, transportation equipment, agricultural equipment, and in educational, health and insurance services. There is no evidence that this specialization will or should soon end. For the area as a whole, it has provided a very diversified economic base, and for individual communities, many of the traditional social and economic problems of one-industry towns have been mitigated by the proximity of nearby communities providing alternative sources of employment.

The following development objectives are designed to build upon this historic capability for regional economic strength through local specialization while at the same time enhancing community social diversity through improved inter-regional mobility.

Regional plans for Southwestern Ontario should, therefore,



seek to achieve:

1. A form of development which combines regional economic diversification with industrial specialization in sub-regional zones and improves community social balance through diversified regional employment opportunities.
2. A distribution of economic growth opportunities for private industry which provides employment within commuting range of all parts of the four Southwestern Ontario regions.
3. A nodalized decentralization of urban growth which avoids unsightly and uneconomic sprawl or strip linear development, but rather, builds upon existing centres' capacity for growth, and distributes this growth among a large enough number of centres to retain a human scale in the size of future communities, thus ensuring economies of scale without the diseconomies of congestion.
4. A transportation system which shapes the pattern of future urban growth as a deliberate instrument of long-term development policy, provides community residents with easy commuting access to a variety of nearby employment, cultural and service centres, and provides employers with the ready availability of an expanded and diversely skilled labour market, significantly larger than that of any single community.





5. An environmental protection which, while accommodating population growth, ensures the economic provision of water and sewer services along multiple-service corridors, and protects the future use of the region's strategic waterfront and escarpment recreation lands and prime farm soils.
6. A flexibility in planning which recognizes the many unpredictable elements in future technology, modes of transportation, industrial location and personal life style and maintains the region's capacity to accommodate such changes; a realism which utilizes the existing hierarchy of urban centres for economic distribution of public services, but acknowledges the variability in individual community growth which can never be precisely predicted.
7. A pattern of partnership in planning which encourages local participation in each critical stage of the planning process and ensures that resulting action programs reflect an amalgam of local municipal, county, regional and Provincial viewpoints.

G. Implications for Planning in the Haldimand-Norfolk Area

For the past 12 months, the Department of Municipal Affairs in cooperation with other departments and the Haldimand-Nor-



folk Joint Study Committee have been reviewing the growth implications for Haldimand and Norfolk counties of Stelco's decision to develop a new steel plant at Nanticoke. Simultaneously, the Department of Treasury and Economics' Regional Development Branch has been analyzing overall trends, problems and future development opportunities in the wider Niagara and Lake Erie regions. The two departments will be presenting complementary plans for this area of Southwestern Ontario in the near future, and both agree that the foregoing regional development goals and objectives suggest the following planning principles for the Haldimand-Norfolk area:

1. Full use should be made of the development potential of existing urban centres in planning the distribution of future regional growth.
2. Any new centres required should be located along major prospective transportation corridors where strategic gaps occur in the current distribution of growth centres. Such new centre sites should be selected in areas where they can draw upon the employment, cultural and service facilities of existing centres and receive future population overflow from the larger of such neighbouring centres.
3. Wherever development alternatives permit a conscious choice among new sites for residential or industrial use, care should be exercised in order to minimize



the loss of better soils or recreation sites and to avoid disturbing the local ecology.

4. The selection of new centre sites should give careful consideration to the possible economies of shared regional water supply systems. Larger inland centres of Southwestern Ontario are already planning to draw upon the Great Lakes for future water supplies. The water distribution pipelines designed to serve these centres should be planned on a regional basis.
5. Future lakefront industrial sites should be consolidated where services and access roads can be shared and should be in locations which present the least conflict with the most attractive existing and future recreation areas.
6. Any major future transportation facility planned for the Lake Erie shoreline should be located close enough to the lakefront to serve the east-west travel desires of industrial and private vehicular travel, but far enough inland to ensure that induced urban growth does not impinge upon either lakefront industrial, recreational, or scenic-drive sites.
7. The precise location of this Lake Erie transportation facility, its access points and its interchanges with north-south connections to non-lakefront centres should



be planned with the intent of enhancing the nodal function of strategic southern tier growth centres which will be named in the development plans for the regions.

8. The priority assigned in scheduling major transportation improvements will reflect both prospective future traffic demand and such development objectives as:

- a) Encourage the location of employment opportunities within those areas which have experienced below average rates of social and economic development in recent years.
- b) Forestalling the community deterioration and travel congestion which could result from a significant increase in industrial and commuter traffic along existing highways.
- c) Minimizing the danger of uncontrolled linear urban sprawl filling in the undeveloped lands between communities along existing highways leading to major future industry and employment concentrations.

9. Success in avoiding indiscriminant scatteration of future urban growth in Southwestern Ontario depends very largely upon effective limitation of access along regional highways, control of subdivision development and concentration of future water and sewage treatment facility investment in selected growth centres. All regional plans should be in accord with Provincial commitments to:





- a) Incorporate access limitation features in all major new improvements to inter-regional and inter-city highway facilities.
- b) Maintain strict control over residential and commercial subdivision along those inter-regional and inter-city highways which must serve increasing traffic volumes until new limited access facilities can be provided.
- c) Allocate priorities for new municipal water supply and sewage treatment facilities in accord with regional plan designation of future growth centres.







